





DUBLIN GRAND OPERA SOCIETY

Winter Season 1987

Gaiety Theatre, Dublin

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Front Cover: "Interval at the Dublin City Opera House in 1999?



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Profile — Mrs Margaret McDonnell.

The Artistic development of every civilisation has been achieved by the belief in intellectual and financial support of the Artist by the Patron. The role of patron in the arts has been well documented through the ages, and they have been just as important to the cultural development of their society as the actual artist. Without patronage would the world have ever known the artistic riches it now possesses? I think not.

We, the Dublin Grand Opera Society have been no exception to that rule. We have been priviledged and extraordinarily fortunate in having Mrs. Margaret McDonnell as a very special patroness, totally committed to the continuation of Opera in this city and the survival of this Company. Her role has been quite unobtrusive but brilliant.

On the 20th February, 1941, in the Central Hotel when the Dublin Grand Opera Society was officially born and the late Bill O'Kelly took the chair, I am quite sure that nobody present that evening visualised the extrordinary growth of this company and the vital position it would hold in the musical life of this city to-day. During these World War II years our Seasons at the Gaiety were given with all-Irish casts and in 1944 patrons; subscriptions were introduced. This is where Margaret's association with the Dublin Grand Opera Society began. She always loved music and played piano as a child. Her father was a very good violinist and, growing up, the family enjoyed musical evenings. When she married, Colm, who also shared her interest in music, became a very dear friend of the Dublin Grand Opera Society.

Her memories are legion and often hilarious. No privileges for patrons in the forties — you queued just like everybody else outside the Gaiety while the late J.J.O'Connor marched up and down keeping everyone in line. Couldn't see it happening to-day!

At the end of the war the Company brought in

singers from England for the first time; the D.G.O.S. had spread its wings. In 1948 the principals of L'Opera Comique Paris brought Debussy's *Pelleas et Melisande* to Dublin. This was made possible by a subvention from the French Government and operagoers were thrilled. This led to a demand for more continental singers by Irish audiences and so a long association with Italy began. A need for a special Patrons; Committee arose and so a group of opera lovers came together and formed a very active committee indeed who gave full support for everything. Margaret was a driving force here right from its inception.

In 1950 when the principals of the Hamburg State Opera brought Mozart's *Don Giovanni* and *Cosi fan Tutte*, Bill O'Kelly experienced severe difficulties boarding out these luminaries. Margaret housed part of the cast and remembers with delight sipping her coffee watching rehearsals of *Cosi* taking place on the lawn in the afternoons.

Her beautiful South Dublin home has played a significant role in the history of the Company and in funding its many operations. Here Margaret has hosted opera balls and musical evenings — who could ever forget those magical evenings with the late Jacques Klein at the piano? This year the house was the setting for the Tennis Classic with the entire McDonnell clan taking part. Over a hundred people playing tennis for Opera.

Margaret was a founder member of the Ladies Committee and it would be impossible to list her achievements on behalf of the Society since then. Nor would she wish it. One can only marvel at her extraordinary commitment and energy. She has been our loyal friend in every need, our loyal supporter in change. Positive, progressive and true, she is Patron Extraordinaire.

Caroline Phelan.

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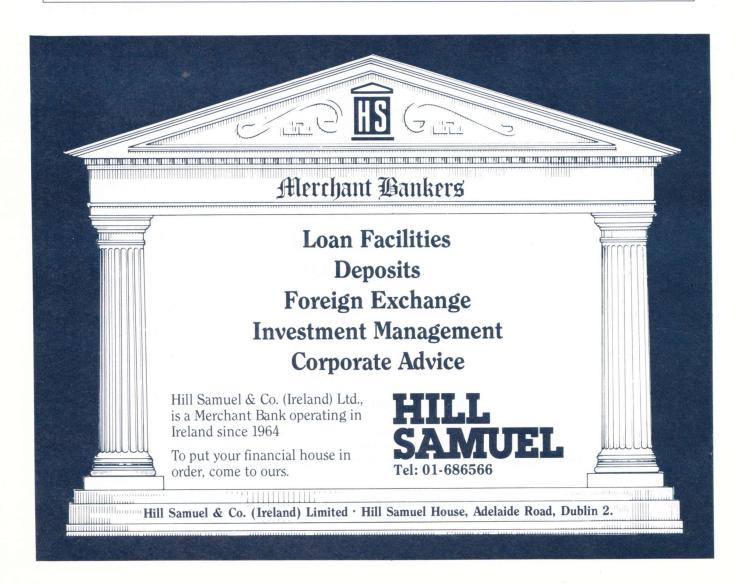
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General Information: Smoking is prohibited in the auditorium. Glasses and bottles may not be brought into the auditorium. The use of cameras and tape recorders is prohibited.

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Ices: Ices are sold on each level of the auditorium during the interval. For the benefit of party organisers, orders may be placed in advance.

Bars are situated on the Parterre, Dress Circle and Grand Circle levels.

All bars are open half an hour before the performance and during the interval.

To avoid queuing for your interval drinks, you may pre-order your drinks and reserve a table in any of the Bars.

The interval order form is displayed in the Foyer and in each Bar.

Coffee is available in all the Bars.

At the end of the performance the Bars on the Dress Circle and Parterre levels will remain open.

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RIGOLETTO

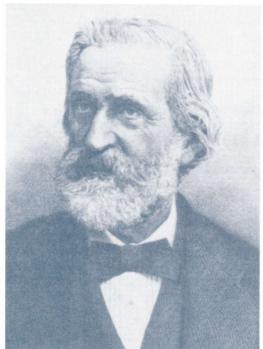
LOVE WITHOUT LIBERTY

What Rigoletto tells is a truly shocking story. At the heart of the action there is the abduction and rape of a sixteen-year-old virgin; at the climax of the opera the same teenager is murdered at the mistaken instigation of her own father. Could an audience which is made aware of what is going on fail to be shocked by these callous events? Throughout the drama the Duke uses his position and power for womanizing and for humiliating those he rules over. In his relentless pursuit of sexual conquests he insinuates himself into the favour of the innocent young Gilda by lying to her; when she falls into his hands in his own home, he rapes her.

Afterwards he plays with her disturbed affections while continuing his depraved hunt for other sexual victims. Gilda's obsessively jealous and secretive father effectively imprisons her, calls her his "universe", and tries to keep all other men away from her, while all the time assisting and scoffing at the violation of other young women by the Duke. The world of the court is murky, vile and sinister.

Gilda's is a characteristic nineteenth-century story: that of a woman who engages our attention precisely because she does not conform to society's expectations. She has no family, gets no husband, and chooses to die violently. Her life in the drama is typified not by what she does but by what is done to her. In this she is a typical romantic heroine. In the course of her debasement there is a degree of personal growth that no other character achieves. She is caught between two ambiguous lovers - the Duke and her father; each displays to her conflicting faces, one loving and tender, the other selfish, possessive and cruel. Musically Gilda is assailed by both of these sides in her relations with each man.

This is one of several formal symmetries in this carefully constructed masterpiece, focus and intensify the dramatic which irony of Gilda's place in the dark world of the patriarchal court. The power relations between the Duke and his subjects and between the hirer and the hired, are balanced by that between fathers and daughters. The crucial curse at the end of the first scene, when Count Monterone damns the jester for laughing at a father's pain, is remembered by Rigoletto at the end Act I, and balanced by his own cursing of the Duke at the conclusion of Act Two. The retribution that the two fathers cursed for is ironically delivered and withheld simultaneously in Gilda's tragic death.



The most strikingly pointed parallel in the opera is the symmetry of shame shared by father and daughter after Gilda's rape. She is discovered in shame by him at exactly the same moment she discovers his shame - that he is the court fool. He has been too ashamed before to tell her of his occupation: his unmasking to his daughter coincides with the public revelation of her own dishonouring.

Verdi at this point shows a depth of emotional and psychological penetration that had not been reached in music-dramas before. The exploration through music of both the characters' emotional states and of the

psychological potential in the dramatic situations they take part in is pushed by Verdi in *Rigoletto* beyond anything he had achieved in his earlier works. The whole opera demonstrates Verdi's supreme mastery of musical technique harnessed to an expressive dramatic purpose. Throughout the work there is a consistency of musical texture that gives it a characteristic and irresistible tone. At many points the superb control of complex musical and dramatic forces permits Verdi to convey many different layers of meaning simultaneously.

When Rigoletto is first confronted by Sparafuciile the dark colouring of the orchestral *texture* sustains a constant mood of evil, while the formality and understatement of the orchestral *melody* conveys beautifully a sense of psychological serenity: we are presented with an awareness that Sparafucile can inhabit wickedness with serenity and complacency. At the same time the voice of the orchestra and libretto are pitched at separate levels of communication: the orchestra speaks the language of "decorum", while the libretto's speech is "humour". With consummate economy, Verdi constructs a complex scene that can be assimilated at many levels. The amount of information available is vastly beyond what his earlier works predicted.

The form of Gilda's reverie-aria *Caro nome* shows how Verdi brings into service his musico-dramatic resources. This innovative aria is a series of organically developing variations as Gilda reflects on her "message" from the desguised Duke. Musically the "theme" is stated by the flutes before Gilda starts her song: her variations are indeed *musings* on this theme. Here it is the dramatic action and the very melody itself that are interwoven. The irony in the situation that renders this lovely and pure melody so poignant

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resides in the fact that we know the "dear name" itself is a lie; Gilda does not know her "beloved's" name at all: the form her sincere emotional expression takes is rendered ironic by the Duke's insincerity. We remember too that the hapless daughter does not even know her father's name. It is ignorance that robs her of preparedness for the dreadful events to come. This seemingly transparent moment in the opera hides in its depths a reminder of the nexus between knowledge and power, and of the errors grounded in the lack of knowledge that will lead to the protagonists' powerlessness to avoid tragedy. The end of Caro nome shows Verdi at his inventive peak: into the coda of the aria come the disruptive rhythms of the ensuing chaos. Formally there is a cadence; but dramatically it is permeated by tense signals of the sinister action that overtakes Gilda.

To be awed by Verdi's complete control of the musical language available for communicating emotions of all kinds, we need only listen to the scene in which the distraught jester confronts the courtiers in his search for the kidnapped Gilda. Here the interplay of real and simulated emotion is conveyed with stunning lucidity. Rigoletto as the accomplished pretender that he has been forced to become at the court, initially dissimulates his true feeling. During his repeated La ra, la ra, the sound of his voice carries the convincing sincerity of great buffo performance; the orchestra comments relentlessly, almost montonously on his plight: it is a musical combination full of pathos - but even more than that it is musically ironic; for from within the painful pretending of the stricken jester, the orchestral accompaniment does not merely remark on Rigoletto's behaviour, it presents us with a more profound psychological reading of it. The music functions here in a way that many critics have claimed is a unique creation of Wagner. The passage is comparable to the best of the exchanges between Siegfried and Mime.

With Rigoletto's aria *Cortigiani* the affecting unity of drama and music goes even further. Instead of building to a climax in the traditional manner, the aria falls apart musically, in dramatic keeping with his increasing despair, and we retreat with the protagonist into an internal, private grief. Subtly and touchingly the orchestral rythms blur and falter. The formal conventions crack in the face of such powerful anguish. Here the integration of the music with the dramatic development and the revelation of character arrives at a new pitch.

Throughout the whole last Act there is complete musical continuity, overwhelmingly conveying a sense of inevitability. The wonderful lyrical passages are contained within the gathering and ineluctably developing storm music. The theatrical power that Verdi achieves through this enables him to build climax upon climax. The effect of having the reprise of La donna è mobile "quoted" within the dramatically relentless momentum of the unstoppable music that rushes all round it, is like that of an expected blow. The revival of recitative in this Act masterfully conveys both the gripping feeling of urgency and secrecy and an appalling sense of the matter-of-factness with which evil works itself out in high tragedy.

Within this opera Verdi dares to expose and use for

his dramatic purposes one of the darker strands of significance lurking in the aria-tradition. In a famous comment on the opera, Verdi wrote that he "conceived Rigoletto without arias, without finales, as an unbroken chain of duets". Five arias, however, occur in the work, none of them conventional. All of them reveal a great deal about the characters, none more so than those given to the Duke, who has three out of the five. Each of these brings out the egoism of the man and his emotional self-absorption. The meaning of the aria as a form is taken by Verdi and reapplied to stunning effect: when the Duke sings, the "normality" of the form in other operas is stripped away, and the monstrous self-concentration of the singer is made manifest in the very form that elsewhere had seemed so innocent of sinister significance. In the Duke's arias the very act of displaying emotional intensity by singing alone is focused on. It is exactly as if we were made aware that in the place of a conventional soliloguy a character was talking to himself. This is one of the most extraordinary features of this extraordinary music-drama.

The Duke's two short arias, Questa o quella and La donna è mobile, are both musically integral to the surrounding pattern of sounds, and are dramatically used to reveal the Duke's character, not in the selfrevelatory way of traditional arias, but by their very form. Each is a strophic song. The continuity of music is to the fore in the first scene. Questa o quella with its dance-rhythms and its verse-form, becomes throughly integrated into the sequence of rhythmic forms that make up the dancing music of the opening festivites. In the short song the Duke decalares his cynical hedonism and contempt for both women and genuine feeling. Such an attitude is unheard of in Italian opera before this; but it is in accord with the witty faithlessness of French operatic gallants. That the strophic dance-song here would seem more at home in an opera comique than in a romantic melodrama gives added point to the aria and to the whole first scene.

Although La donna è mobile seems musically similar, it is dramatically completely different and used for quite a contrary purpose. It is a canzone - a piece that would have been sung even in a spoken drama. It is not the Duke's personal statement, but his favourite song - a hit-tune of the moment. Its misogyny is in the air of the court: that it is the Duke's pet song is indicative of his cast of mind. Verdi uses this fact brilliantly: at its first citation by the Duke, the song is woven into the whole scene through its long fading coda, and it reasserts itself as a motif from within the Duke's mind during those scenes where the perfidy and unjustness of its sentiments are brought into such telling relief by the heroism of Gilda's mistaken faithfulness. The dramatic contrast between the trivial popular song and the musical setting Verdi gives it is dramatically a breakthrough in operatic vocabulary.

The irony of the Duke's double-aria in Act II is that it *seems* so conventionally expressive. Can this vile, deceitful egotist *have* such feelings to express? This is no lapse of characterization on Verdi's part: the Duke's ego-preoccupying aspirations to real depths of feeling are indeed self-deluding. That he is given

such a beautiful, poetic utterance rather than conspicuously shallow insincerity is a Verdian touch of genius - the Duke's lack of psychological insight permits such self-deception that his insincerity can ensnare himself too. Provided that he cannot have and debase a woman, he can imagine that he is truly in love with her. With Gilda seemingly lost to him, he can pour out intense sorrow for her unobtainability: what he cannot have he could, he thinks, have loved. His seriousness about this, if temporary, is believed in by himself. Once he knows that he does have Gilda in his power, he reverts to being overtly a predatory hedonist. In musical terms the cabaletta Possente amor mi chiama restores the dramatic balance: on his way to rape Gilda the Duke still thinks of himself as "a slave of love"; but Verdi demonstrates what kind of man he is when he can lay his hands on a "beloved" victim. The whole aria displays psychological depths through the music that the libretto alone merely

In a well-loved film, coincidentally titled *Gilda*, Rita Hayworth performs an ironic strip-tease to the song "Put the blame on Mame, boys". In this song a woman is held to blame for practically every known disaster. Blaming the victim is a common ploy, especially where rape is concerned. *La donna è mobile* makes it seem as if it is the woman's fault that they get done over by men: men need the treacherous creatures that they are powerless to resist! In *Bella figlia dell'amore* the Duke declares "*Schiavo son de'vezzi tuoi*" - *I am*

a slave to your charms": Maddalena is blamed for the Duke's passion! The only one destroyed by the machinations of the men is the innocent Gilda. The curse works, but at her expense. Is she to blame? An eminent Verdian expert recently called Gilda "a silly infatuated girl". Is this estimation of her adequate? She is lied to by her father, decieved by her "Walter", spied on, locked up, kept ignorant of her family name and father's business, is abducted by a mob of heartless aristocrats, terrorized, raped, and finally murdered. Categorizing her as a mere "silly girl" is to perpetuate the dismissive blaming of woman that the Duke proclaims in his trivializing songs. Where does Verdi stand on this? As with other victims of male power and desire - Amalia, Luisa, Lina, Leonora, Violetta, Aida, Desdemona - Gilda is sensitively supported and sympathized with by the composer: the opera with its penetrating psychological probing of the possessive father and the compulsively womanizing seducer lays bare the articulation of power and sexual desire in the world where a Gilda has to be misunderstood and victimized. When the heroine declares at the end that she loved the Duke too much and is dying for him, we understand how everything in the universe that Rigotetto so lucidly depicts is structured to make its Gildas die for love. Theirs is the love without liberty that the Duke mocks right at the beginning. For the pity and the shame of this, Verdi has us weep.

Peter Caldwell

SYNOPSIS

ACT I — SCENE I

A salon in the palace of the Duke of Mantua, early evening. A ball is in progress.

The Duke enters with his wife. He takes his good friend Borsa aside and they discuss an unknown girl whom the Duke has seen in church.

He is determined to make her his next conquest, but for the moment he openly flirts with the Countess Ceprano and leads her away under the very nose of her husband and his own wife.

Rigoletto, the hunchbacked entertainer at the palace, who has been watching the proceedings and who has the habit of making bitter fun of everybody, chooses for his victim the crestfallen Ceprano. Count Ceprano swears to take his revenge.

Tension builds up between Rigoletto and the courtiers, but the bright atmosphere of the ball overrides the short spell of gloom. Suddenly Count Monterone bursts in and before the startled guests denounces the Duke as his daughter's seducer.

The Duke summons his bodyguards and has count Monterone arrested. Rigoletto makes fun of Monterone's grief whereupon the old man hurls a father's curse at Rigoletto, leaving him terrified.

ACT I — SCENE II

A deserted alley, with on one side the courtyard of Rigoletto's house and on the other side the backwall of Count Ceprano's palace. Late at night.

Rigoletto appears still haunted by Monterone's curse.

He is approached by Sparafucile, a professional assassin. Although betraying some interest, Rigoletto says he has no present need for his services, but makes a point of asking how he can be found.

Left alone, Rigoletto makes a bitter comparison of himself with the assassin and laments his own unfortunate life.

Shaking off his disturbed mood, he enters the courtyard of his house, warmly greeted by his daughter Gilda.

He warns her never to leave the house on her own except to go to church and reminds her duenna Giovanna to watch over his beloved child.

Thinking he hears a noise, Rigoletto rushes into the street. Disguised as a student, the Duke slips into the courtyard, noticed only by Giovanna to whom he throws a purse.

Rigoletto returns and bids farewell to Gilda, addressing her as "daughter", which surprises the Duke.

When Rigoletto has finally left, the Duke motions Giovanna to withdraw and throws himself at Gilda's feet, declaring his love.

The girl is strangely moved by the handsome young man. He tells her that he is Gualtier Maldè, a poor student. Footsteps are heard in the street outside and, fearing it is Rigoletto returning, Giovanna hastily hurries the Duke out via the house.

Left alone Gilda muses fondly upon the supposed name of her lover.

As she goes up the stairs to her house the prowling courtiers led by Ceprano, Borsa and Marullo, all of them masked, enter stealthily and comment on the beauty of Gilda, who mthey take to be Rigoletto's lover. They have assembled to take their revenge by abducting the young girl when Rigoletto suddenly appears on the scene. At first, frightened he then recognises Marullo who lures him in to join the practical joke which Rigoletto believes they're going to play on Count Ceprano.

Marullo produces a mask and, on the pretext of making it more secure, binds it on Rigoletto with a handkerchief so that he can neither see nor hear.

He is made to hold a ladder against what he takes to be the wall of Ceprano's palace — but which in fact is his own, while the others climb over, seize and bind Gilda and carry her off. Too late he realises that he has been fooled.

He tears the mask from his face and rushes into the house. There is no sign of Gilda.

The old man's curse is working.

ACT II

A room in the Ducal Palace, with doors leading to the adjoining bedrooms of the Duke and the Duchess of Mantua. Early the next morning.

The courtiers enter with Gilda, whomthey leave locked up in the Duke's bedroom.

Unaware of this the Duke enters shortly after in great agitation. He laments the loss of Gilda, who for the moment had given so much happiness to him.

Marullo, Borza and Ceprano enter with the other courtiers telling the Duke that they have just abducted Rigoletto's "mistress". The Duke on hearing what has happened realises that the abducted girl is none other than Gilda.

Overjoyed at his luck, the Duke goes off to comfort his beloved victim.

Being convinced that his daughter is somewhere in the palace Rigoletto enters, determined not to betray his anxiety and grief to the mocking courtiers.

However his is put to the test.

When a lady in waiting enters, to say that the Duchess wishes to speak to her husband, the courtiers jokingly answer that he has gone hunting.

Rigoletto suddenly realizes the Duke must be with Gilda. He reveals that Gilda is not his lover but his daughter. At first he threatens them but, failing to make any impression on the courtiers, he pleads for the release of his daughter. The door bursts open and Gilda throws herself into her father's arms.

It is obvious from her distraught state that the Duke has not failed to live up to his reputation. Furiously Rigoletto orders the courtiers away. Gilda reveals the truth, still showing her affection for the Duke.

Rigoletto's world has changed within a single day.

And, as if to bring home the curse, the tortured Monterone passes through the room on his way to execution.

Rigoletto swears that the Duke shall pay with his life, but Gilda pleads with her father to spare him, such is the power of her love.

ACT III

The dilapidated inn of Sparafucile on the bank of the river Mincio — a month later. It is night.

Outside are Rigoletto and Gilda. Gilda has told her father that she is still in love with the Duke and that she believes he really returns her love. Rigoletto has brought her here to prove that her lover is worthless and inconstant.

He tells her to wait and watch and soon she sees the Duke entering the inn, looking for Maddalena, whom he has previously met in the street.

Although at first rejecting his advances Maddalena soon succumbs to the charms of the Duke.

Sparafucile, who has been hired by Rigoletto to kill the Duke sneaks out of the inn and receives from Rigoletto half of his fee in advance, the balance to be paid on delivery of the dead body.

Gilda, having disobeyed the orders of her father to travel to Verona, returns and overhears that Sparafucile plans to murder the Duke.

Storm clouds begin to gather and the Duke is easily persuaded to stay overnight, making it easy for Sparafucile to carry out his task. Maddalena pleads with Sparafucile for the life of the handsome young man, who has touched her heart. He eventually agrees to kill instead any stranger that might arrive before midnight at the inn. Gilda resolves to sacrifice her own life to safe her faithless lover. Summoning up her courage, she knocks at the door and enters the inn. Recognising the girl Sparafucile refuses to kill her. Maddalena grabs his sword and completes the deed. The storm abates and a distant bell tolls midnight.

Rigoletto returns to the scene of the crime. Sparafucile comes out of the inn carrying a sack which he says contains the dead body of the Duke. Gloating over his victim, Rigoletto drags the sack towards the river

Suddenly through the night air he hears the hated voice of the Duke. Horrorstruck, he tears open the sack and a flash of lightning clearly reveals Gilda's face. She is still alive but dies in his arms, asking for his blessing. Rigoletto throws himself in despair upon her body. "The curse is fulfilled" he cries.

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Libretto by
Francesco Maria Piave

RIGOLETTO was first
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Teatro La Fenice, Venice
on March 11 1851.
The first performance of
this production was
December 3 1987 at the
Gaiety Theatre Dublin.

Conductor: Albert Rosen Director: Jan Bouws Designer: Frank Raven Lighting: Mark Pritchard Repetiteur: Eithne Lynch

CAST

DUKE OF MANTUA	INGUS PETERSON
BORSA, friend to the duke	PAUL McCANN
COUNTESS CEPRANO	MARIE WALSHE
RIGOLETTO	PETER McBRIEN
COUNT CEPRANO	CIARAN ROCKS
MARULLO, a poet	JACK O'KELLY
MONTERONE	FRANK O'BRIEN
SPARAFUCILE, a professional assassin .	CURTIS WATSON
MADDALENA, his sister	.Deirdre Cooling-Nolan
GILDA, Rigoletto's daughter	ILENA VINK
GIOVANNA, her duenna	JOAN O'FARRELL
A LADY IN WAITING	SHEILA MOLONEY
OFFICER	NOEL O'CALLAGHAN

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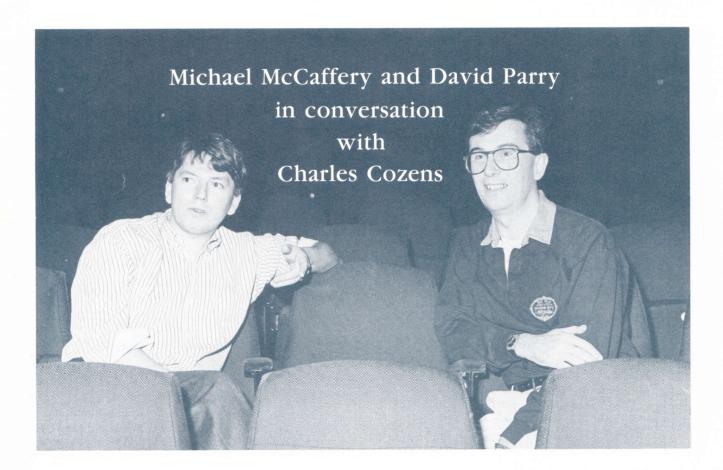
The action of the opera takes place in Italy in the mid nineteenth century.

There will be an interval of twenty minutes after Act One and another of twenty minutes after Act Two.

The opera ends at approximately 10.15 p.m.

GAIETY THEATRE DUBLIN
December 3, 5, 8, 11. 1987
7.30 p.m.

DON PASQUALE



Charles Cozens: Why did you choose to do Don Pasquale?

Michael McCaffery: Three basic issues affect the choice of an opera. Is it any good, can we put it on successfully and will people come to see it? *Don Pasquale* is generally regarded as a masterpiece, some very exciting singers were available and the opera has a good track record here in Dublin. This will be the eighth production. Speaking with a director's hat on, I find it immensely exciting and life-affirming — two qualities that I feel are vital to any sort of theatre.

David Parry: It's one of the most important and most interesting comic operas and that in itself is a sufficient answer, I think.

CC: It has a reputation for being rather lightweight and sweet—

DP: Sweet it's not!

MMcC: Certainly not. And it's unusual in that it's held the stage continuously since 1843. Out of that whole school of bel canto opera, very few have held the stage and *Don Pasquale's* one of them. Not just because it's fun but also because it fascinates us still. It has something to say to us still, no matter how lightheartedly it says it.

DP: It's one of the great opera buffas. Possibly the last one apart from *Falstaff*.

MMcC: I think it has a lot in common with *Falstaff*. The central character is an old man, the situations are

highly comical and inventive but there's an emotional reality at the heart of the scene which shines through. A true comedy rather than a mere farce.

CC: In our last programme, Paddy Brennan referred to the Donizetti revival. Do you think that description is justified.

DP: Yes I would say so. As you probably know I've been associated with a lot of Donizetti operas — particularly recordings of the little-known ones and so I suppose I'm in the vanguard of the Donizetti revival. I think there is now a public interest in this music that one would have found inconceivable twenty years ago.

MMcC: I think a lot of it has to do with the enormous suitability of this music to certain kinds of "star" singers. It suits the kind of singing rather than the kind of *music* that is popular today.

CC: What kind of singers does it need?

DP: Singers who can sing! You need both strength and agility for this sort of music. I've heard singers — and very good ones — who say "Oh, I can't sing a run". I think that's nonsense. For a long time, singers were expected to make a choice between strong singing and flexible singing. The tide's turning and they're beginning to realise that they must be able to do everything.

MMcC: And you need a special type of stage performer

too. A lot of archive material from the mid 19th century shows us the action of important scenes in these operas and if you look at the "stills" from *Don Pasquale* they suggest that the original performers were very active and expressive on stage. The "standand-deliver" school of acting just doesn't work in these operas. And Donizetti wrote music for action. It's highly formalised acting and it sometimes causes problems for the performer who has been trained to act "naturalistically". What works in *Bohème* doesn't *can't* — work in *Pasquale*. You need constantly to work with the singer to justify the stage rather than take it for granted.

CC: David, what do you think makes Donizetti different from Bellini or Rossini?

DP: He has, by far, the greatest sense of the dramatic moment. People find him difficult to categorise, I think, because of this. The convenient tags that are applied to the other two don't work with Donizetti and whereas the other two made important contribution to ninetheenth century Italian operas, I think one can say that it is Donizetti who is absolutely mainstream to the whole development of the form. He forms a direct line through to Verdi and Puccini. He bridges what otherwise would have been a broken tradition. And that's why you need those flexible and strong singers we talked about before.

CC: Well, more specifically to *Don Pasquale*. For both the conductor and the director, what's the special attraction of this opera?

DP: Well, for me it has two huge attactions. It has an unrivalled series of hit numbers. You've got nothing to worry about. It all works and it's all of a very high quality. Also it absolutely expresses the spirit of any one given moment. Particularly, it has this fantastic ironic sense. For example in the Act Three duet for Norina and Pasquale, the waltz is at once a lullaby and a seduction, a comfort and a taunt. And with Ernesto, Donizetti allows us to laugh at him through comic situations but gives him great dignity and pathos through the heroic idiom used for his music.

CC: You sound very passionate about Donizetti.

DP: I am. I'm a great Donizetti fan!

MMcC: What really puts him in the front line of composers for the theatre, I think, is that he expresses perfectly what he wants to convey. And he has such tremendous energy. The sort of energy which makes real comedy possible. No matter what the characters get up to, the composer always makes it quite clear that we're to laugh at them. There's a sort of demonic energy in the music which makes it very challenging to stage.

CC: And what is Pasquale like to conduct?

DP: Well the great thing about conducting mid nineteenth century Italian opera is striking the balance between accompanying and being in the driving seat. There's no choice with Donizetti: you have to do both at the same time.

CC: Is there a balance the director needs to strike? MMcC: I think so. The opera is very clearly not only derived from the standard opera buffa but is very much a continuation of it. At the same time, the composer's making considerable structural and formal

developments in this opera. You need to strike a balance between the stock situations and the conscious use of them in new surroundings. There's a lot of *commedia dell'arte* in *Pasquale* but there's also an emotional reality which needs to be looked at and presented. The piece is based in a knowledge that the conventions reflect *real* emotions: love, disappointment, passion, generosity, obstinacy. One of the great features of *Don Pasquale* is the way that Donizetti succeeds in presenting them through the acknowledged conventions.

CC: The libretto sets the action in Rome. Why does your production take place in Venice?

MMcC: Principally to highlight the atmosphere of carnival and of the *commedia* which I think are at the heart of the work. Carnival is about rejuvenation, about the old year at its height giving way to the new—

DP: Precisely the position Donizetti found himself in with Verdi and Wagner beginning to capture his limelight.

MMcC: And Venice is the home of the *commedia* and the perfect setting for an opera which abounds in intrigue and irony.

CC: David, this production is given without cuts — Why?

DP: Well, most of the standard cuts are the result of a lack of confidence in the work. I don't think composers repeat themselves for the sake of it. The notes are there for a good reason. It's the formal element of the work which gives it its shape and its power and I think you're on dangerous ground if you start tampering with that. I'm very against cuts in this sort of music.

CC: Does the repetitive nature of the music cause problems for a director?

MMcC: No. The problems begin when you start cutting. You disrupt the flow of energy and deprive the opera of one of its greatest strengths simply to make it more "plausible" in a way which is rather inappropriate. I enjoy working with the energy and the tension the "repeats" produce.

DP: And it would have been normal to decorate some of the repeats to reinforce the musical statements. We'll be incorporating decorations in this production. It's a sort of natural involvement of the performers in the creative process — and a natural part of performing.

MMcC: And part of the commedia dell'arte — the comedy of skill.

CC: Now, last season we have *L'elisir*, and with *Pasquale* this season might we expect a Donizetti cycle?

DP: It would be rather long: he wrote seventy two operas!

MMcC: Well, there's only one real Cycle, isn't there? — the Ring. I certainly believe there's enough dramatic interest and musical value for us to think of Donizetti as one of our 'regular' composers. It would be interesting to see how, say, *Maria Stuarda* would work out. But there are no definite plans as yet.

CC: Thank you both.

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The Dublin City Opera House?

A new Opera House for Dublin is justified by several factors. There exists both here and internationally a growing demand for both opera and the live performing arts in general. Dublin has a long tradition in the production of Opera but, sadly, a major lack of facilities is still a problem. A properly designed Opera House would provide in Dublin a new venue for Opera, Musicals, Ballet and Drama.

In nineteenth century Dublin, of all forms of music, Opera had the largest following. The Theatre Royal in Hawkins Street had opened in 1821 with a seating capacity of 3,800 and Italian Opera Seasons with internationally famous singers were held several times each year as well as in The Queen's Royal Theatre, which opened in 1844.

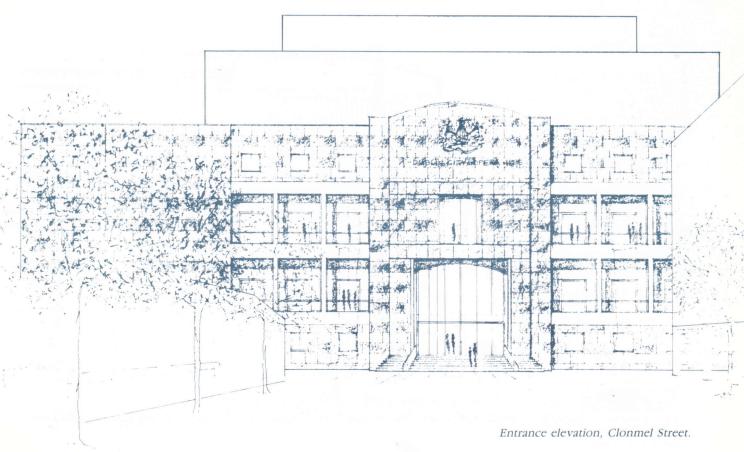
Operas produced in London or on the Continent arrived in Dublin after a remarkably short time lag and some one hundred and fifty different operas were staged in Dublin between 1850 and 1900, most of them unknown or little known by their audiences. Italian Opera in Dublin can, however, be traced back to 1777, where the first contemporary newspaper account of the season appeared on January 8, 1777. That opera season was presented at "The New Theatre, Fishamble Street."

Throughout the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century a series of opera companies performed at the Gaiety Theatre. Various attempts were made over the years to establish a resident opera company. The Old Dublin Amateur Operatic Society and the Corinthian Operatic Society sadly only

survived a couple of years. The Dublin Operatic Society founded in 1928 made a determined effort to present Grand Opera in a worthy manner and presented opera in the Gaiety for over a decade before moving to the Olympia. This society survived until the mid fifties.

On February 20, 1941 a "meeting of those interested in a season of Opera at the Gaiety Theatre" was held in the Central Hotel, Exchequer Street, Dublin. It was a most enthusiastic gathering and it was agreed to form a society, the title of which would be the "Dublin Grand Opera Society". A week of opera consisting of Il Trovatore, La Bohème and La Traviata, was arranged to take place in the Gaiety in May 1941. Since then, with the sole exception of the 1984 Spring Season when the theatre was unavailable due to refurbishment and the operas were presented at the Olympia, the Society was staged two seasons each year in the Gaiety.

Now, a young Dublin architect proposes the tantalising prospect of "a purpose-designed building, reflecting the grandeur of Opera as well as the status of Dublin as a capital city." Sheila Carney is a recent graduate from the School of Architecture at the Bolton Street College of Technology. As her Thesis for the Diploma in Architecture, she undertook to design an Opera House for the City of Dublin. Her interest in this subject was prompted by her father's long association with the Dublin Grand Opera Society. She is currently working with Messrs. Scott Tallon Walker, Architects in Dublin.

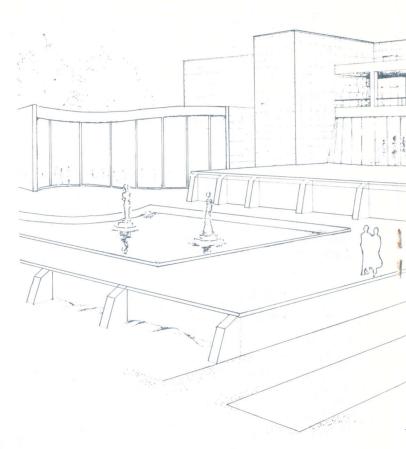


The site for the proposed Opera House is the northern end of Iveagh Gardens, entry being from Clonmel Street (off Harcourt Street). Several criteria influence this choice of site, the most important being that it is in the heart of the city centre, in reasonable proximity to similar activities (e.g. The National Concert Hall) with available car parking and it presents the opportunity to develop a "music garden".

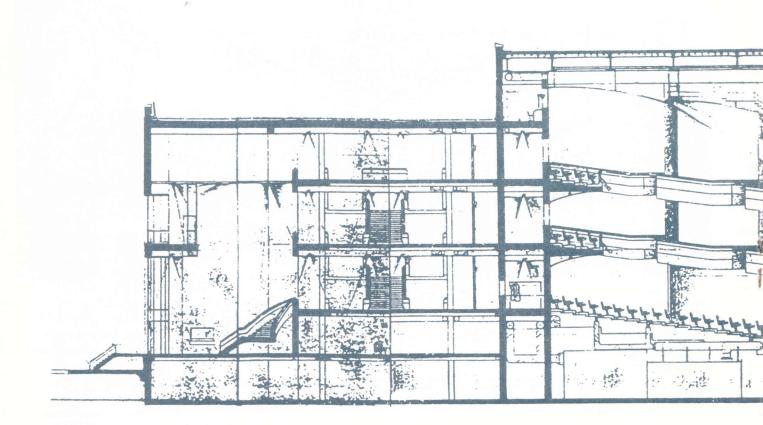
The design of the building itself is strongly influenced by the fact that it would be in full-time use both day and night. Day-time uses of the building include a large exhibition space (also the main foyer space) for receptions, product launches etc. A Restaurant/Recital room opens onto the gardens to the south, where lunchtime concerts and recitals might be performed. A separate Bar/Restaurant opens onto the Russell Court office development and would be run as a concession providing extra revenue for the Opera House.

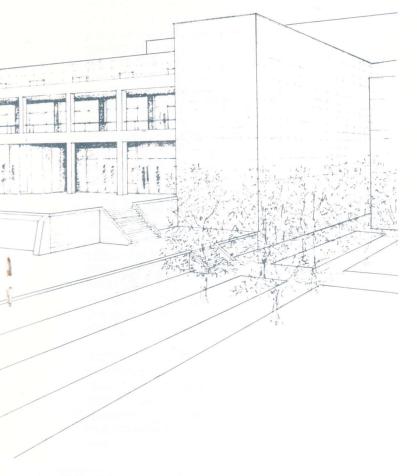
The Dublin Grand Opera Society would be a resident company in the new building with their complete management and administrative requirements housed in the building. The approximate Gross Floor Area of the new Opera House is 17,360m² (approximately 187,000 sq. ft.)

The Auditorium seats approximately 1400 people, arranged in a large Proscenium Theatre on several levels. The foyer and bar spaces surrounding the auditorium to the west and south, incorporate a substantial amount of glazing, so portraying light, colour and activity to the city at night. A series of



A view of the terraces from the Music Garden.



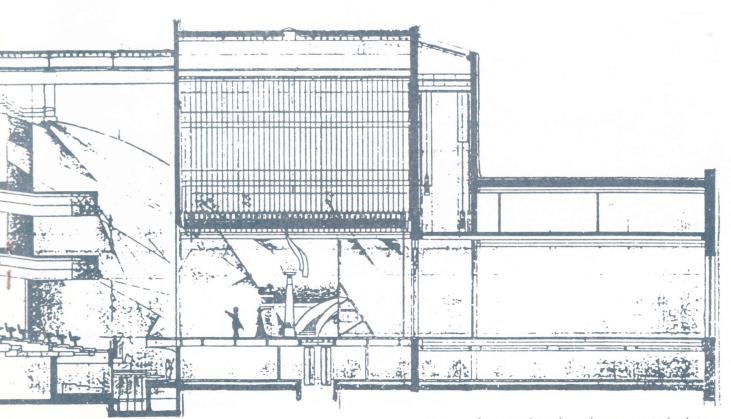


balconies and terraces step from the public area of the building down to the gardens. These would be relandscaped in keeping with their original layout. A series of different gardens are proposed, each with its own theme and landscape, representing different forms of music (i.e. an Italian garden, French garden etc.) Several of the existing sculptures are repositioned and spotlit in a reflecting pool below the Parterre and Dress Circle terraces. The entire space becomes a "music garden" shared between the New Opera House and the National Concert Hall.

The Backstage Area or the "Production Zone" is served by a completely separate entrance at the Northern End of the National Concert Hall. This entire area, incorporating the stage fly tower, scene-docks and all supporting ancillary spaces is planned as freely as possible to ensure maximum flexibility. The structure and flying system chosen for the fly tower allow for maximum space at stage level and ensures the smooth running of all technical aspects of a performance.

Modern technology would be applied to all elements of the building, both structurally, aesthetically and in the working components of the theatre itself.

The scheme would appear to be an appropriate one for Dublin to undertake on this, the eve of her Millenium and a suitable monument to afford Dublin the chance to take her place among the cultural capitals of the world.



Long section, through entrance to backstage.

One of the last nights of the Carnival

Don Pasquale the Italian Comedy

This comedy of mistaken identities is taken from the old Italian theatre known as the commedia dell'arte..... the comedy of skills. The stock characters of this form were the old man (Pantalone = Pasquale) the clever schemer (Harlequin = Malatesta), the witty fair one (Bell'Inamorata = Norina) and the lover (Lelio = Ernesto). The characters performed in masks and used improvised dialogue often very scurrilous and witty and their skills as mimes to create bizarre accounts of everyday existence. The audience saw a distortion of everyday life but, at the same time, could recognise basic human situations under the mask.

This was the most popular sort of theatre in Italy and France for nearly two centuries. The actors belonged to specific troupes and lived together as a family, passing on the roles and skills from one generation to another. The Italian comedy was well established by the mid sixteenth century and was often deployed in great early operas as light relief or for interludes. The tradition of opera and commedia being combined is an old and honourable one.

The *commedia* was imported from Italy to France in the 1570's for the wedding of the Medici to the House of Navarre and from about 1595 until the 1660's the French Royal Family maintained a *commedia* troupe for State occasions - the Théatre des Italiens. The troupe performed in Italian to begin

with and later added more French to its dialogues. It was replaced in the 1660's by Moliére's Théatre du Soleil troupe who used many of the same plots but added to them an increasing number of what we might call psychological interests. The minor themes of the characters were developed into major themes for entire plays: the avarice of the Pantalone becomes the ruling passion of L'Avare, the miser. Pantalone's pretensions become the subject of selfdeception and stupidity (Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme) and, interestingly in the present context, the dependence on duplicitous quacks (also a feature of Pantalone's make up) is developed in Moliére's last great human comedy Le Malade Imaginaire (The Hypochondriac) where an avaricious old man decides to thwart his children's happiness in order to preserve his own life through unscruplous doctors and duplicitous servants. The commedia, born in Italy, grew up in France, and, it might be suggested, came back to die there in Don Pasquale, the last of the great opera buffas and the last of the true commedia dell'arte.

The *commedia* originated in Venice and it is there that this **Pasquale** is set. Venice is also the home of the great dramatist Carlo Goldoni who was responsible, or as he claimed in typically Venetian style, for the revision of the *commedia* in typically Ventian style, for the revision of the *commedia* into one of the most vital and interesting dramas now in



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the European repertoire. The crude simplicity of the commedia figures is given an overlay of elegance and brilliance: the plots are not merely to do with wills and marriage settlements, with litigation and money, but with the psychological backround to all these devices. There are strong resonaces of Goldoni in Don Pasquale one of his most famous plays, La Vedova Scaltra is not only alluded to but consciously used by the disguised Norina to describe herself and it is for that reason that we have used Venice, rather than Rome, for our backround in this production. The combination of simple characteristics and subtle psychological overlay is a

characteristic of both Goldoni at his greatest and of Don Pasquale.

Don Pasquale is no more commedia dell'arte but that is where its roots lie and we have tried, every now and again, to bring those roots to the surface. The spirit of Carnival, that quintessentially Venitian experience celebrating the demise of the old year and the birth of the new with passion and lightheartedness simultaneously lies at the core of the opera. It is summed up ideally by Goldoni, one of whose latest plays was rather nostalgically titled Una dell'ultime serre delle carnivale One of the last nights of the Carnival.

Michael McCaffrey

SYNOPSIS

Ernesto, the nephew of Don Pasquale, a rich old bachelor loves a young widow, Norina and therefore refuses to marry the woman of his uncle's choice. Doctor Malatesta, Pasquale's physician and the friend of Ernesto and Norina, has been enlisted to find the old man a wife. Little does Pasquale suspect that the crafty Doctor is a double agent.

ACT ONE Don Pasquale's house

Don Pasquale waits in trepidation for Doctor Malatesta and news of his future wife. Malatesta arrives and tells the old man that a suitable wife has been found. Lovely as angel, modest and obedient, she has the added attraction of being the Doctor's distant relative his sister. Fresh from her convent.

she is the perfect wife for an old bachelor. Pasquale dispatches his friend to bring the bride to his home and reflects with increasing frenzy on the joy-and the half-dozen children- the sister will bring him.

Ernesto's timely arrival allows Pasquale to revel in telling him his news. Horrified, Ernesto rails against malicious fortune and the false friend Malatesta who has betrayed him. Pasquale prepares for his nephew's immediate departure.

The scene changes to Norina's lodgings. She is reading a romantic novel. Norina laughs at its sentimentality: she knows the power of a glance or a tear, a tantrum or a thousand other tricks. It is her principal enjoyment to play with men in this way but, she assures herself, underneath it all, she has a heart of gold.

A letter arrives from Ernesto. He informs her that



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ПАП Стота

THE INDIVIDUAL CHOICE

he will leave Venice to mend his broken heart in some far-distant country. Norina is distressed and when Malatesta arrives, she rebukes him for the failure of their plan to trick Don Pasquale and the anguish which has been caused to Ernesto. Malatesta laughs at Ernesto's letter and proposes a new development to Norina which will save the situation and affirm their original plot. Norina will go to Pasquale disguised as Malatesta's innocent sister Sofronia. With the aid of his cousin Carlotto, disguised as a Notary they will trick Pasquale into believing that he is married. Norina agrees to take part, provided that no further harm is done to Ernesto and they rehearse the performance that Norina will give as Sofronia. The act ends with a duet in which Norina plans her revenge while Malatesta marvels at his ingenuity and her talent as an actress.

INTERVAL OF TWENTY MINUTES ACT TWO

Ernesto wanders the streets of Venice, suitcase in hand. Before he leaves, he wants only to reassure Norina that, should she ever love another man, he will understand and that she has his full blessing.

Meanwhile, Pasquale is at home preparing for his marriage. The servants are instructed to admit no one but the doctor and the stranger who accompanies him. Pasquale congratulates himself on his state of preservation and is practicing his courtship when the doorbell rings. The Doctor arrives with "his sister". She is heavily veiled and her timidity gives Pasquale instant courage. He is charmed by her but wants to know what is under the veil. Malatesta persuades him that this is rushing matters and suggests a little conversation to break the ice. "Sofronia" ensures the Don that her pleasures are simply those of the kitchen and the sewing-room. Pasquale's impatience overcomes him and he begs the Doctor to commend her to remove the veil. He is staggered by her beauty and calls at once for a Notary to complete the marriage. Malatesta already has one waiting cousin Carlotto heavily disguised and the ceremony progresses until getting carried away with his performance characterisation, Carlotto announces the marriage is invalid without a second witness.

The frustrated parties leap on him but are interrupted by the sound of Ernesto, battling with the servants to gain admittance. He breaks into the room but Don Pasquale welcomes him, enjoying his aid as the second witness. The new bride is brought forward and Ernesto is dismayed to discover that it is Norina. Malatesta quickly tells Ernesto to be patient and have faith in him. Cousin Carlotto completes the "marriage" and makes a hasty departure.

Overjoyed, Pasquale attempts to embrace his new wife. An immediated transformation occurs and she becomes a viper, berating him for his vulgarity and his ugly, uncomfortable house. Ernesto realises her plot and begins to join in with it. The poor Don is dumbfounded. Norina demands to see the servants and ridicules the idea that she will be mistress of such a shabby household. She tells the steward to employ more help and to give them excellent liveries. Pasquale asks who will pay. He will, of course, says

Norina and the act ends with a furious Don Pasquale raging at the trick that has been played while the lovers secretly delight in their reunion and the possibilities the new plan brings them to marry with Pasquale's consent.

INTERVAL OF TWENTY MINUTES

ACT THREE

Pasquale's peaceful existence has been overturned and Norina is holding open house. Servants rush to and fro to prepare her for an outing. Pasquale appers to complain of the turmoil and is dunned by his newfound creditors.

The short marriage has already cost him a fortune but Pasquale resolves to take the matter in hand. Norina enters glamourously dressed on her way to the theatre and when the Don tries to make her stay at home a row ensues during which she strikes him. He is heartbroken. Norina reflects that the lesson must be hard to be effective and that victory is just round the corner. She taunts him and he resolves on divorce as the only way out of the catastrophic marriage. She leaves him callously, dropping a paper as she goes.

Pasquale reads it. It is a love letter in which Sofronia is summond to a secret assignation. He resolves to send for Malatesta at once and goes off to plot his revenge.

The crowd appers again and comments that the comings and goings in the house begger description. Still life is fine for them, even if the nephew seems to attract the new mistress and trouble the old man.

Malatesta arrives with Ernesto. He is to wrap himself in a large cloak and meet Norina as appointed. The Don enters and informs his old friend that his wife has ruined him, beaten him and is planning to betray him. Malatesta urges caution and suggests that they should surprise the secret lovers at their assignation. Delighted, Pasquale revels his imminent revenge while the Doctor glories in the success his plan is enjoying.

Scene 2: Outside Don Pasquale's house

Ernesto arrives, serenading his mistress, The two meet and stage an elaborate charade of lovemaking for Pasquale's benefit. When the old man and his Doctor eventually appear, Ernesto steals into the house while the Doctor and the old man, search the street in vein for Sofronia's lover. Frustrated the old man tells his "wife" that she is finished and that a new mistress will arrive tomorrow Ernesto's new wife, Norina. "Sofronia" pretends rage and attacks "that scheming bitch of a widow Norina." Ernesto appears to confirm the story and Malatesta seizes his opportunity to tie things up. He reveals that Norina has arrived already for "Sofronia" is Norina. The lovers beg the necessary forgiveness which Don Pasquale only just manages to withhold, but his relief at being free of "Sofronia" makes him give his blessing. Norina tells Pasquale that a simple but perfect moral can be extracted from the situation: Leave love to the young and do not attempt to trick those cleverer than yourself. The opera ends with general rejoicing as the protagonists celebrate their happiness in the midst of the Carnival.

MMcC

DON PASQUALE

DON PASQUALE

Comic Opera in Three Acts. Libretto by Giacomo Ruffini

DON PASQUALE was first performed in Paris at the Theatre des Italiens, January 3rd 1843. The first performance of this production was at the Gaiety Theatre, Dublin, on December 4th 1987. Conductor: David Parry Director: Michael McCaffery Designer: Vikki Mortimer Lighting: Barbara Bradshaw Repetiteur: Jimmy Vaughan

CAST

DON PASQUALE	ENRICO FISSORE
DOCTOR MALATESTA	RUSSELL SMYTHE
ERNESTO, Pasquale's nephew	GIUSEPPE COSTANZO
NORINA, a poor widow in love with Erneste	oNUCCIA FOCILE
CARLOTTO, Malatesta's cousin disguised as a N	otaryCIARAN ROCKS Dec. 4, 10 DUNCAN MCKENZIE Dec. 6

PASQUALE'S SERVANTNOEL O'CALLAGHAN

THE CHORUS OF THE DUBLIN GRAND OPERA SOCIETY Chorus Master: Phillip Gilbert

RADIO TELEFÍS ÉIREANN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA (By kind permission of the RTE Authority)

Leader: Audrey Park

The action of the opera takes place in Venice during the Carnival.

There will be an interval of twenty minutes after Act One and another of twenty minutes after Act Two.

The opera ends at approximately 10.15 pm.

GAIETY THEATRE DUBLIN December 4, 6, 10, 1987 7.30 p.m.



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THE PEARL FISHERS

AN INTRODUCTION

HARRY WHITE

BACKGROUND TO THE OPERA

The crisis of style and personality which characterised the early career of Georges Bizet (1838-1875) were significantly resolved in the production of Les Peĉheurs de Perles (hereafter, The Pearl Fishers) at the Théâtre-Lyrique in Paris, on September 30th, 1863. Notwithstanding the performance of a one-act operetta in 1857, The Pearl Fishers was the first of Bizet's major dramatic works to see the stage, and it interrupted a long series of projected enterprises which were either abandoned by the composer or frustrated by circumstances of financial failure and repeated postponments. Such delays continued to affect

Bizet throughout his life, and so *The Pearl Fishers* marks a point of comparative stability in the composer's career which he did not regain until the production of *Carmen* in 1875. Then, recurring

illness intervened and he died.

Bizet's precocious musical ability, his thorough conservatory training and his absorption of contemporary French, German and Italian musical theatre meant that he was particulary well-placed to take advantage of the demand for operatic works which prevailed in France during his lifetime, almost at the expense of every other kind of serious musical endeavour. Nevertheless, both of the state opera houses in Paris were bastions of conservative taste, where the once novel achievements of Meyerbeer and Rossini (at the Opéra) and of Auber, Boieldieu and others (at the Opéra-Comique) dominated and subsedquently retarded the development of French opera throughout the middle decades of the nineteenth century. Only the Théâtre-Lyrique, a company beset by financial uncertainty, attempted to further the cause of native French opera, and during its tenure (c. 1847-1870) it premiered works by Gounod, Berlioz and Bizet. Such a work was The

As a winner of the Prix de Rome in 1857, Bizet was obliged to submit a series of works to the French jury as testament of his progress as a scholarshipholder. The fourth and last of these works was a setting of a one-act piece entitled *La Guzla de l'Émir*, which, according to the provisions of the Prix de Rome, was to be given at the Opéra-Comique. This was probably composed in 1862 and it went into rehearsal a year later. In 1863, the Théâtre-Lyrique was offered funding to provide for the production of a three-act opera every year by a young winner



of the Prix de Rome. The director of the theatre, Léon Carvalho, accepted this offer, and he commisioned Bizet to set the libretto of The Pearl Fishers by Eugéne Cormon and Michel Carré. Funding for this commission was conditional upon the composer never having had a work staged (in this respect, Bizet's 1857 operetta did not disqualify him) and Bizet consequently withdrew La Guzla from rehearsal at the Opéra-Comique. The contract for The Pearl Fishers was signed in April 1863, with the production scheduled for the September following. Thus pressed for time, Bizet borrowed considerable portions from other

of his works, and he completed the greater part of the score in August. The opera met with a mixed (and largely patronizing) critical reception, and it did not find particular favour with the public: After a total of eighteen performances it disappeared from the repertory until 1886. *The Pearl Fishers* was thereafter given in various European and English houses (including a Covent Garden production in 1889, in Italian). The 1893 Opéra-Comique revival signalled a brief period of popularity for the work in France.

THE TEXT OF "THE PEARL FISHERS"

The libretto which Carvalho offered to Bizet is an uneven text hampered by a scarcely tenable subplot clumsily resolved and by a poorly drawn (if not unconvincing) exotic locale. Although both librettists responsible for The Pearl Fishers were long experienced in opera, they were reportedly aware that they had provided the composer with an unsatisfactory text, particularly with regard to its conclusion, which remained undecided until very late in the process of composition and rehearsal. The plot of this libretto is primarily concerned with friendship, love and betrayal, themes which clearly foreshadow the preoccupations of Carmen, and which stimulated in Bizet a level of musical response and articulation which overcomes in part the inherent shortcomings of the text.

The Pearl Fishers is set in Ancient Ceylon, on an "arid and wild beach", although the initial choice of locale was Mexico. The working title of the opera, Leila, gives some indication that the story is one of personal and romantic intrigue. This story is given an exotic setting which affords a loosely based melodramatic representation of tribal Hindu life. At the outset, the Pearl Fishers elect Zurga as their chief,

and swear loyalty to him. Nadir subsequently appears, and is greeted by Zurga as his long-absent friend. They recall their love for the priestess Leila, whom they first saw together many years previously, and whom they both foreswore not to love, for the sake of their friendship, which they now renew. Leila then comes ashore, accompanied by the high priest, Nourabad; Leila is veiled, and under a strict oath of chastity. Her duty is to pray to Brama for protection for the fishers as they plunge the depths of the ocean for pearls. Nadir recognizes Leila's voice (he cannot see her face) and secretly he proclaims his love for her, which she reciprocates. They are discovered together by the high priest, who strips the veil from Leila's countenance, thus revealing her to Zurga. Enraged by jealousy, Zurga condemns the lovers to death.

Somewhat earlier, Leila has told Nourabad that as a very young girl she had saved the life of a fugitive, who gave her a keepsake, a necklace, in gratitude. Now, at the point of her execution, she removes the necklace, which Zurga recognizes as his gift. Shaken by remorse, Zurga effects the escape of Nadir and Leila, by distracting their angry captors (the fishers) with a fire set to the tribal camp. Having released Nadir and Leila, who flee to safety, Zurga remains to wait for certain death.

At its worst, this material is no more than a mediocre reworking of stock characterisations and well-tried dramatic situations. The plot specifically recalls Spontini's La Vestale (1807) and Bellini's Norma (1831), and more generally is reminiscent of the passion, sexual jealousy, rage and recrimination which fuel and propel the action of much romantic opera. At its best, the text has the force and impact of archtype and myth. The emotional drive achieves real power in Zurga's remorse at the beginning of the third act, and in his subsequent encounter with Leila, who enters a plea for Nadir's life. The tribal presence of the chorus affords a ritual context for the action which is nevertheless impaired by the infortunate "necklace" subplot, and is distorted by the hasty and ill-prepared resolution of the main plot.

Nourabad, the high priest, is but a shadowy figure, and Leila herself, in Winton Dean's description, "remains the typical suffering soprano." The potential conflicts which permeate the libretto, between the obligations of love, loyalty, religious and tribal vows and the responsibilities of leadership, are deprived, in short, for a wholly successful dramatisation because of the poor construction of the text. Given these limitations, Bizet's musicodramatic achievement in the score is all the more remarkable.

THE MUSIC

The range and power of Bizet's vocal writing, thematic and motivic organization and orchestration are, of course, most prominently available in *Carmen*. But these elements are prominent in *The Pearl Fishers* also, which contains not only memorable music of considerable impact, but also a sense of music-drama which is sure and confident, if not especially original. The musical language and many of the principles of musico-dramatic organisation in *The Pearl Fishers* are derived from

Gounod, Verdi, Meyerbeer and Wagner. Bizet's selfproclaimed ambition to write "German" music may typify the "wrong turning" (Winton Dean) which his music took from time to time throughout his career, but in *The Pearl Fishers* his use of recurring themes and leading motives, and his skilful integration of large-scale choral episodes, which imbue the text with resonant dramatic power, owe much to the devices of German (Wagner) and Italian (Verdi) opera. The prelude to the opera, for example, combines Bizet's own predilection for ostinato figures with a melody that later recurs at Leila's entrance, and which we retrospectively recognize to be symbolic of her tragic rôle in the tale. The famous duet in the first act, during which Zurga and Nadir affirm their mutual friendship, introduces another theme (strongly reminiscent of the *Dies Irae*) which appears throughout the opera whenever this friendship is in question and particularly when the course of the action threatens to undermine it. Thus Nadir's shocked recognition of Leila's voice in Act One is set against this theme, which in its various statements gradually encodes the supremacy of one relationship (between Leila and Nadir) over the other (between Nadir and Zurga). The close of the opera reinforces this dramatic device, when Leila and Nadir share the theme together against an independent musical idea from Zurga.

The choral episodes and vocal ensembles afford much of the most striking and vivid music in *The Pearl Fishers*. The opening choral number is immediate and urgent in impact, and its rhythmic vigour, colourful orchestration and sudden juxtaposition of chromatic flashes with bold, unison vocal articulation combine to potent effect. In a different vein, the lilting and tender ode of welcome with which the Pearl Fishers greet Leila, manifests a more gentle mode of tribal expression, while the close of the second act - a bloodthirsty demand for death - is depicted by Bizet in strokes of rhythmic insistence which brilliantly give voice to the clamouring mob.

The degree of feeling which Bizet registers in the first-act duet between Zurga and Nadir, and in Zurga's recitative and aria at the beginning of the third act together with the extended scene between Zurga and Leila which follows, is rarely attained elsewhere in the opera. At his best, Bizet enriches the text with a depth of expression which increases our interest in what happens to the characters, however improbable their circumstances. The opening of act three, for example, features a progression from anguished recitative to lyric remorse which feelingly registers Zurga's state of mind and brings into sharpe relief the prevailing concerns of the opera. The music here lends memorable conviction to the text and authenticates the mode of feeling expressed in the libretto. At other times, however, Bizet's music scarcely overcomes the tired sentiments of the libretto, and although such numbers as Nadir's Je crois entendre encore ("I think I can still hear") manifest a wistful vocal line offer a rhythmic ostinato, the overall impact of this and other solo numbers is thematically banal and undistinguished. Much of Leila's music also falls short of the dramatic power attained in many

of the ensembles and choruses.

Throughout the score, however, the orchestral articulation of ideas, banal or otherwise, is notably vivid and compelling: the percussive texture of the opening chorus, the ethereal harp and flute in the act one duet between Zurga and Nadir, the cor anglais in Je crois entendre encore; these are but some examples of Bizet's genius for orchestral colour and its potential dramatic suggestiveness. The score also manifests a complexity of harmonic colour which likewise affords a degree of musical commentary on the emotions which are explicit or implicit in the text.

We find in the score of The Pearl Fishers, in short, a mode of musico-dramatic expression already formed and assured, if not perfected. We also find music of great beauty and power, which commands our attention despite passages which are devoid of special interest.

CRITICAL RECEPTION AND CONCLUSION

Winton Dean has described the state of musical criticism in France during Bizet's life time as "deplorable". Nevertheless, the French musical press, amidst a host of irrelevant remarks on Bizet's personal disposition, identified the large debt he owed in The Pearl Fishers to Verdi, Gounod and Wagner. Hector Berlioz, moreover, wrote a review of the opera which was singular in its considerate and well-balanced assessment of Bizet's score, and other composers, including Halévy and Gounod also held the work in esteem. Despite this regard, the work was not taken up during Bizet's lifetime, as we

have seen, and later revivals testify to the troubled history of the work in performance, particularly with regard to the last scene in the opera. This underwent drastic revisions in the score published late in the last century. Not until 1975 did Choudens, the publishers of the work, issue a photographic reproduction of the 1863 vocal score, which we know to have been prepared under Bizet's direct supervision. Bizet's orchestral score is no longer extant, and the oldest surviving orchestral score is based on one of the "revised" versions, which incorporates a trio (for the three main protagonists) by Benjamin Goddard, as well as other substantial cuts and changes. In 1973, Welsh National Opera produced a version based on the original 1863 vocal score, with the passages therein not included in the posthumous orchestral score orchestrated by Authur Hammond. This version was also used in a 1978 recording of the work which featured the chorus and orchestra of the Paris Opera, and in the English National Opera/Opera North co-production which opened this year (1987).

Given this cluster of new performances, not least among them the present Irish production, we may perhaps challenge Bizet's own assessment of the work as a "brillent and honourable failure". Whether or not we agree with this judgement, The Pearl Fishers, in Winton Dean's words, allow us "to see in embryo many of the qualities that were to make Bizet the foremost dramatic composer in France".

Harry White, 1987.

A Note on the Music

What immediately struck me on first reading the original score of The Pearl Fishers was the extraordinary sharpness of Bizet's musical and dramatic ideas. I was particularly happy to share this discovery with Mike Ashman.

We are dealing here with a work that has been widely underestimated and often badly misunderstood. The passages in the score which are traditionally "disputed" (the Leila/Nadir duet 'O lumiére sainte" and the Zurga/Leila duet-sometimes restored in performance today - and the original ending of the famous Nadir/Zurga duet which nobody dares stage today) seem to me quintessential to a full understanding of the piece. In fact Bizet went beyond the original intentions of his librettists, who had merely offered him a reworking of La Vestale. In so doing he showed his genius.

In my opinion Bizet's work constitutes a polemic against German romanticism, particularly against its obsession with the lovers "world of the night". Moreover, The Pearl Fishers, actually contains an aesthetic debate: Bizet finds a balance between dream and concrete reality. It is possible to read into this piece a kind of mockery of the myth of Tristan and Isolde: their two loves act out their roles, although they are incapable of living them because they are bound up in their humdrum everyday

existance. (We must not forget that they have to go on living even after the story has ended!). It is particularly noteworthy that the structure of Act II resembles in miniature that of Wagner's Tristan premiered two years after The Pearl Fishers.

The so called musical weaknesses have been much criticised. It is true that the score contains moments of great beauty alongside passages that are trivial. Bizet reminds us that artistic creation and good taste do not necessarily go hand in hand. It would be an injustice to acuse Bizet of incompetence, even if his provocative methods smack a little of youth. For example, he shatters the vision of the wonderful first act duet (using a very modern theatrical distancing technique); he alters the basic nature of the great Brahma chorus when it is repeated in Act II (even though it is generally performed in such a way as to make this change unrecognizable!) and he upstages a potential "Liebestod" in Act III with music of a highly artificial and deliberately empty nature. I am convinced that all these passages give the piece a fine overall balance and that cuts have certainly not helped the work to survive in the repertoire.

Valentin Reymond, Dublin, December 1987.

LES PÊCHEURS DE PERLES

SYNOPSIS

Prelude

Fleeing for his life, Zurga is given shelter by a young girl, Leila. In gratitude he gives her a bracelet.

Some years later Zurga visits Candy in the company of Nadir, a close friend from his home village. Both men fall in love with the priestess at the temple; realising that such rivalry will destroy their friendship, they swear on oath that neither will pursue the girl. Zurga returns home and keeps his word. Nadir follows Leila around the country: they fall in love but separate.

ACT I

Villagers celebrate the beginning of the pearl-fishing season (Chorus: Sur la greve en feu) among them Zurga and Nourabad, their high priest. Zurga is nominated and then appointed their chief. Nadir returns to his people after a long absence: he has been living as a hunter but will now accept their invitation to remain at home. Zurga questions him as to whether he has remained true to their oath, but Nadir can only reply by invoking the memory of their visit to Candy (Duet: Au fond du temple saint). After a brief argument, they reaffirm their friendship and willingness to forego the love of Leila (Duet: Amitié sainte).

Voices announce the arrival of a veiled virgin priestess who will pray each night for the fishermen while they are at work. Ancient custom says that her singing will drive away evil spirits and make the pearl harvest a rich one. The chosen priestess arrives — it is Leila — and is interrogated by Zurga. She swears not to reveal her face to any villager, to break the oath will mean her death. Nadir's impassioned reaction to this danger gives his presence away to Leila. Zurga mistakes her reaction for fear but Leila agrees to do her duty, even at the cost of her life. The villagers invoke the gods' blessings (Chorus: Brahma, divin Brahma) and Leila goes to pray for their evening's fishing.

Nadir decides that his suspicions that he has found Leila again are the result of a guilty conscience: he must tell Zurga what really happened to him after the visit to Candy. He consoles himself with memories of Leila's voice (Romance: Je crois entendre encore) then goes to sleep.

Nourabad orders Leila to chant her first prayer (air, with Chorus: O Dieu Brahma); the fishermen work beneath her. Nadir wakes up, recognises Leila's voice and promises to protect her from any danger. She is happy to see him there.

ACT II

The fishermen end their work for the night. Nourabad assigns Leila a place to sleep, protected by the sea, the heights and armed guards. She assures him of her courage by relating the story of how she once saved a man's life. Nourabad reminds her of her oath to Zurga. Nadir leaves her alone. Leila prepares for sleep: the thought of Nadir being near gives her comfort (Cavatina: Comme autrefois).

Nadir is heard singing a love song in the distance (Song: De mon amie, fleur endormie). He succeeds in climbing up to Leila; she tells him that it is too dangerous to stay but they declare their love for each other (Duet: Leila! Leila!). they are interrupted by Nourabad who denounces them and summons the villagers (Chorus: O nuit d'époutante). Nadir and Leila are surrounded; the crowd and Nourabad demand their death. Zurga orders the reluctant villagers to allow the lovers to leave in peace but Nourabad reveals that the girl is Leila, the priestess from Candy. In a fit of jealous fury, Zurga agrees to the death sentence. The gods are again invoked (chorus: Brahma, divin Bhahma) and Leila and Nadir led away.

INTERVAL OF TWENTY FIVE MINUTES

ACT III

Zurga wrestles with his conscience, hoping that Nadir and Leila will forgive him (Aria: O Nadir). Leila comes to beg for mercy for Nadir, blaming herself for the sacrilege. On the point of granting her request, Zurga is enraged to hear her declaration of love for his friend. He resolves to carry out the death sentence, and Leila curses' him (Duet: Je frémis, je chancelle). Before Nourabad takes her away, Leila gives her bracelet to a guard to be returned to her mother. Zurga recognises it and realises that he has a duty to her: it was she that once saved his life.

The villagers dance and sing in anticipation of the coming sacrifices: the executions will take place at daybreak. (Chorus: Des que le soleil). The prisoners are reunited and sing of their joy in dying together (Duet: O lumiere sante). A red glow appears in the sky and Nourabad prepares to put Leila and Nadir to death. But Zurga rushes in with the news that it is not the dawn but flames from the village which is burning down. It is a trick: Zurga himself has fired the huts to save his friends. Explaining this to Leila and Nadir, he sets them free, content in the knowledge that he has done his duty.

DUBLIN GRAND OPERA SOCIETY

LES PÊCHEURS DE PERLES

(The Pearl Fishers)

Opera in Three Acts. Text by Michel Carre and Eugene Cormon Additional orchestrations by Arthur Hammond

LES PÊCHEURS DE PERLES
was first presented at the
Theatre Lyrique, Paris on
30 September 1863. The
present production,
first seen on December 7 1987
at the Gaiety Theatre, Dublin
is the first presentation of
Arthur Hammond's
reconstruction of Bizet's full
material.

Conductor: Valentin Reymond

Director: Mike Ashman Designer: Bernard Culshaw Lighting: Mark Pritchard Choeography: Anne Courtney Repetiteur: David Gowland

CAST

a priestess	VIRGINIA KERR
NADIR, a hunter	GINES SIRERA
ZURGA, a pearl diver	PETER COLEMAN WRIGHT.
NOURABAD, High Priest	JACK O'KELLY

THE CHORUS OF THE DUBLIN GRAND OPERA SOCIETY Chorus Master: Phillip Gilbert

RADIO TELEFÍS ÉIREANN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA (By kind permission of the RTE Authority)

Leader: Fionnuala Hunt

The action of the opera takes place in mythical Ceylon.

There will be an interval of twenty minutes after Act One and another of twenty minutes after Act Two.

The performance will end at approximately 10.00 p.m.

GAIETY THEATRE DUBLIN December 7, 9, 12, 1987 7.30 p.m.



DAVID COLLOPY

was born in Wexford where he studied Accountancy before joining Wexford Festival Opera as Administrator. This position he held for five years. After a short period in London, he returned to Ireland in 1985 to take up his present post of Administrator with the DGOS.



MICHAEL McCAFFERY

(Director: Don Pasquale) has directed many plays and operas. He has worked with the National Theatre of Great Britain, Glyndebourne and the Bayreuth Festival where he directed Wagner's Ring. He is Artistic Director of DGOS and future plans include opera production in Italy and Scotland.



PHILLIP GILBERT

is a graduate of the Royal College of Music and the University of Hull where, in 1982, he won the Special Music Prize for most outstanding student. He worked with Welsh National Opera and Wexford Festival Opera and is now full time Chorus Master with the DGOS.



ALEX REEDIJK

began his career with the New Zealand Opera Company and moved to the New Zealand Ballet Company. His productions include LA BOHEME, LE NOZZE DI FIGARO, COPPELIA and LA SYLPHIDE. He is involved with the London International Festival and has worked with the Lyric Theatre in Hammersmith. He is currently Production Manager with the DGOS.



ALBERT ROSEN

(Conductor: Rigoletto) studied at the Prague Conservatoire and at the Vienna Music Academy. This distinguished conductor began his career in his native Czechoslovakia where he was First Conductor of the Smetana Theatre. In 1969 he was appointed Chief Conductor of the RTESO and is now Chief Guest Conductor, He has conducted regularly with both

Wexford Opera and the DGOS and returns to Dublin after an outstanding debut with TOSCA for the English National Opera in London.



VALENTIN REYMOND (Conductor: Les Pècheurs de

Valentin Reymond was born in Switzerland and studied in Bienne and Zurich. Originally a cellist, he became a conductor in 1976 and since then has conducted and recorded with leading European orchestras, including the Suisse-Romande Orchestra. He made his operatic debut in 1982 with operas by Pergolesi and Telemann and went to the Grand Theatre, Geneva in 1985 where productions have

included *Tristan* und *Isolde* (with Horst Stein), *Pelleas et Melisande* and *The Rake's Progress*. He is the founder of Opera Decentralisé and future plans include a new *Traviata*, the Britten chamber operas and the world premiere of Robert Cornman's *American Dream*



DAVID PARRY (Conductor: Don Pasquale)

Studied music at Cambridge and the Royal Academy of Music, London, as well as conducting under Sergiu Celibidache. He works extensively with Glyndebourne, Opera North and the Aldeburgh Festival and was Musical Director of Opera 80. Most recently, he has conducted in Italy, Spain and France. His first visit to Dublin was in 1986, when he conducted a memorable Madama Butterfly...



MIKE ASHMAN

(Director: Les Pecheurs de Perles)
Mr. Ashman was attached for many years to Welsh National Opera and directed a highly-acclaimed production of Wagner's PARSIFAL for them in 1982. He has since pursued a highly successful freelance career in the UK and abroad. His recent production of DER FLIEGENDE HOLLANDER for the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, was one of the most

memorable and controversial events in the Royal Opera's recent history. Mr. Ashman recently directed I PURITANI in Paris and Weill's HAPPY END in London and last seaons's *La Boheme* for the D.G.O.S.



JAN BOUWS

(Producer: *Rigoletto*)
Jan Bouws was born in
Amsterdam. After graduation
from the Amsterdam University
and The National School of
Opera in London he joined the
Netherlands Opera as an
assistant director. In 1967 he
made a directorial debut in
Cape Town with *Carmen*,
followed in the same year with
a production of Britten's *Albert*

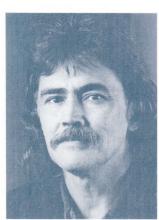
Herring for the Netherlands Opera. In 1978 he made his very successful American debut with Mozart's Cosi fan Tutte for the San Diego Company. He has just finished working on a new production of Verdi's Macbeth for the Rotterdam Opera Company.



VIKKI MORTIMER (Designer: Don Pasquale)

Vikki Mortimer was born in Bristol, England, and educated at Oxford where she read English. A post-graduate student at the Slade School of Art, she assisted Marty Flood on *The Country Wife* at the Oxford Playhouse, where she also designed *The Good Person of Szechuan*. She has designed several London and Edinburgh

Fringe productions and earlier this year designed *The Game of Love and Chance* in Chichester. *Don Pasquale* is her first opera assignment.



FRANK RAVEN

(Designer: Rigoletto)
Born in Indonesia, Frank Raven has been working as a Stage and Costume designer in the principal Theatres in Holland for over 30 years. During this time he has worked on over 200 plays and films. His opera credits include The Rape of Lucretia, Bluebeard's Castle and Sancta Suzanna. Rigoletto is his first production with the Dublin Grand Opera Society.



BERNARD CULSHAW

(Designer: Les Pecheurs de Perles) is one of Britain's leading theatre and opera designers, and was born in India. His extensive production credits are evidence of his distinguished international reputation. We are delighted to welcome him back to Dublin for his second season with the D.G.O.S.



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EITHNE LYNCH

Eithne Lynch studies piano with Professor Sean Lynch at the Royal Irish Academy of Music, where she is the current holder of the Vandeleur Academy Scholarship. She has won many awards at the R.I.A.M. and at Dublin Feis Ceoil. Currently Eithne is in her final year at Trinity College Dublin, studying for a music degree.

Her work as an accompanist

has taken her to many European countries, and in 1984 she gained the 3rd prize for accompanists at the Vienna International Violin Competition.

Eithne is a regular repetiteur with Dublin Master Classes, working with Janos Furst in 1986 and James Lockhart earlier this year. This is her 3rd season working with the D.G.O.S.



DAVID GOWLAND

(Repetiteur: Les Pecheurs de Perles)

is repetiteur for LA BOHEME and accompanist for our Gala Concert. His successes include engagements at the Aldeburgh Festival, on BBC Radio 3 and Radio London and televised appearances at the Proms and the Edinburgh Festival. He was recently Musical Director for Kurt Weill's

DREIGROSCHENOPER at RADA and has worked with Wexford Festival Opera, Opera 80, and de Nederlandse Opera. After Glyndebourne this year, he will return to Amsterdam to commence a full-time contract with de Nederlandse Opera.



JAMES VAUGHAN

(Repetiteur: Don Pasquale)
Rapidly emerging as Ireland's
finest accompanist, Jimmy
Vaughan has received
outstanding critical acclaim as
'virtuoso accompanist' from
"The Irish Times'' most
recently for his recital work
with International MezzoSoprano Bernadette Greevy.
A former student of the
R.I.A.M., he studies piano with

Norma Fisher in London. He is an honours graduate of T.C.D. and a Fellow of Trinity College London. Currently an Italian Government scholar at the Accademia di Santa Cecilia in Roma, he returns to Italy next year for Duo recital work with Maestro Riccardo Brengola.



DEIRDRE COOLING-NOLAN (Maddelena: Rigoletto)

Deirdre Cooling-Nolan enjoys a busy career in all types of music. A frequent concert and oratorio artist, she has sung with all of Ireland's leading choirs and orchestras. Her operatic work includes several leading mezzo-soprano roles with the D.G.O.S. and, more recently, she has begun to work extensively in the contemporary

repertoire, scoring an outstanding success earlier this year as Blind Mary in the Irish permiere of Maxwell Davies' *The Martyrdom of St. Magnus*.



PETER COLEMAN WRIGHT

(Zurga: Les Pecheurs de Perles)
Born in Australia, Peter Coleman
Wright studied with the late
Otokar Kraus, Dame Joan
Hammond, Paul Hamburger,
Erich Verthier and Geoffrey
Parsons. He has sung
throughout Europe and Australia
in both operas and concerts.
His operatic repertoire includes
Gugliemo Falke, Demetrius and
Sid (Demetrius — both at

Glyndebourne) and Morales (CARMEN) and DANDINI (CENERENTOLA — Glyndebourne). With the Nederlandse Oper he appeared in Busoni's DOKTOR FAUST and Wolfram for the Klagenfurt Opera in Austria. He visits his native Australia frequently as a guest of Australian Opera with whom he has sung Pagageno and Masetto. He also records for ABC in Sydney.



GUISEPPE COSTANZO (Ernesto: Don Pasquale)

Giussepe Costanzo was born in Catania and studied there and at the Scala in Milan. The winner of several international competitions, including the 1985 Pavarotti prize, his already extensive repertoire includes Rodolfo, Duca, Arturo, Alfredo and Almaviva. He has appeared at many major Italian houses

(Genova, Parma, La Scala, Milan) and sang Rodolfo in Verona earlier this year. Out of Italy, engagements have taken him to Germany, France, the Netherlands, the U.S.A. and the Far East. He also appears regularly on the concert platform.



ENRICO FISSORE

(Pasquale: Don Pasquale)

Enrico Fissore has sung in all the major opera houses and become a specialist in Rossini, Mozart and in 18th century music in general. He made his debut in the United States in San Francisco as Bartolo in II Barbiere de Siviglia and at the Metropolitan Opera as Melitone in La Forza del Destino. In Europe he has sung in all

important Italian theatres, including Rome, Turin, Venice, Florence, and La Scala where he will be singing Dulcamara in L'Elisir d'Amore in April/May 1988. In Germany he has sung frequently in Munich and Hamburg and in Austria he is a regular guest at the Vienna State Opera. Immediately before coming to Dublin he sang Bartolo in Il Barbiere di Siviglia at the Staatsoper and has been singing the role of Dulcamara at the Metropolitan Opera during the present season.



NUCCIA FOCILE.

(Norina: Don Pasquale)

Born in Italy, Nuccia Focile studied at the Verdi Conservatoire in Turin and participated, with distinction, in several major singing competitions. She made her opera debut in Corghi's Gargantua in Turin in 1984, following this with successful apppearances both as Mimi and Musetta. In 1985 she won the

Pavarotti competition and has subsequently appeared with the great tenor as Musetta and Oscar, in which role she made her La Scala debut last season. Future roles include Despina (Philadephia), Musetta (Scottish Opera) and Nanetta in WNO's eagerly anticipated Falstaff



VIRGINIA KERR (Leila: Les Pêchurs de Perles)

One of Ireland's finest young sopranos, Virginia Kerr won all major awards in Ireland and upon gaining a scholarship to the Guildhall School of Music and Drama went to London to continue her studies. Virginia is in great demand as a recitalist, in oratorio and in opera and her appearances abroad have brought her to several countries

including Spain, Hungary, Germany, Malta and the United Kingdom. She is a frequent broadcaster on Irish radio and television and also B.B.C. Radio 3 and Radio Ulster. She has been featured soloist with both the R.T.E. Symphony and Concert Orchestras. Opera appearances include major roles with the D.G.O.S., Irish National Opera, Opera Theatre Company, Birmingham Touring Opera and Scottish Opera.



PAUL McCANN

(Borsa: Rigoletto) Paul entered the Royal Irish Academy of Music at the age of 19 on a singing scholarship. He won subsequent scholarships annually and now studies with Professor Paul Deegan. He holds the "H.K. Edwards Bursary "Beethoven Cup" and "Ludwig Cup" for interpretation. In Feis Ceoil (Dublin) he has won the 'Tenor Gold Medal' and in Sligo Feis Ceoil he won the 'Sligo Cup'

Paul has sung many roles in light opera. He made his opera debut in 1986 in Paisiello's "Barber of Seville". Since then he has sung "Don Basilio" and "Don Curzio" in the "Marriage of Figaro", "Kasper" in Mennoti's "Amahl and the Night Visitors" and "Ferrando" in the Opera Theatre Company's production of "Cosi Fan Tutte". He also appers frequently in concerts and oratorio.



JACK O'KELLY

(Marullo: Rigoletto) Jack O'Kelly has been studying with Dr. Veronica Dunne at the College of Music, Dublin since 1984. Jack has had many successes in competitive singing including winning the "O'Mara Cup" for the best male voice in the Golden Voice of Ireland competition.

In Spring of this year Jack sang the baritone solo in Sean O'Riada's Nomos No. 2 with the

R.T.E Symphony Orchestra under Bryden Thomson and later Rossini's Stabat Mater with Our Lady's Choral Society and the Dublin Sinfonia under Proinnsias O'Duinn.

He made his operatic debut in Autumn of this year in the role of Guglielmo in Mozart's Cosi Fan Tutte with the Opera Theatre Company.



FRANK O'BRIEN (Monterone: Rigoletto)

Well-known to Irish audiences, Frank O'Brien has performed regularly with the D.G.O.S. since 1978 where recent roles include Rodrigo in Don Carlo, Figaro in The Barber of Seville and Guglielmo in Cosí fan Tutte. He sang Schaunard and Silvio with Cork City Opera, many roles with the Irish National Opera and recently

toured with Opera Theatre Company's production of Cosí where this time he sang the role of Don Alfonso. He is well-known for his concert and oratorio singing, and also regularly performs on radio and television. He rejoins the cast of the D.G.O.S. after a season's absence to sing Monterone in Rigoletto.

D.G.O.S. Chorus

Chorus Master: PHILLIP GILBERT

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Sean Kelly Louis Moore John Murphy Fergus Murray Duncan McKenzie Noel O'Callaghan Martin Robson Peter Ruane Joe Ryan Richard Saddler Barry Webb Graham Webber Alan Westby Tom Wilson

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PETER McBRIEN

(Title Role: Rigoletto)

One of our most exciting operatic baritones, his repertoire includes oratorio and lieder as well as opera. He has toured extensively in Europe and America and is a regular guest with the D.G.O.S. After his success in our last Traviata, we welcome him back for his first Rigoletto.



INGUS PETERSON

(The Duke: Rigoletto)

was born in 1959 in Riga, U.S.S.R. He began his career as a pop singer and became famous as such in Latvia before studying to be an opera singer. His teacher at the Latvian State Conservatory is a former dramatic tenor of the State Opera, where Ingus Peterson is now principal tenor. After his Wexford appearance as Arturo in La Straniera, this is his second engagement in Western Europe.



GINES SIRERA (Nadir: Les Pêcheurs de Perles)

Gines Sirera was born in Spain and now lives in Paris. He made his debut with the Opera du Nice and has appeared all over Europe. He made a successful Dublin debut in Manon in 1980 and his repertoire includes all the major tenor roles. He is a specialist in French opera and has recorded Massenet's littleknown opera Sappho. Other roles include Hoffman, Werther, Faust and the Puccini tenor



ILENA VINK (Gilda: Rigoletto)

Ilena Vink studied at the Royal Conservatoire with Meinard Kraak and was a distinguished prize-winner in the 1979 Den Bosch vocal competition. A busy operatic career has included several major roles with the Netherlands Opera and she performs regularly with the Forum Opera where roles have included Leila, Lucia di Lammermoor and Fiakermili. She has recently appeared with great success in Mozart's early opera La Finta Semplice



CURTIS WATSON (Sparafucile: Rigoletto)

Born in Jamaica, Curtis Watson studied at the Jamaican School of Music: Trinity College. London and at the Tchaikovsky State Conservatoire in Moscow. He was a prize-winner in the 1984 Belvedere International Competition and won the Mario del Monaco Competition in the same year. His operatic engagements have taken him to numerous USSR theatres and

more recently to British theatres - Glyndebourne and Sadler's Wells. He appeared first in Ireland in 1986 at Wexford and sang Colline in the Dublin Bohème last season.



RUSSELL SMYTHE

(Malatesta: Don Pasquale) Russell Symthe studied at the Guildhall School of Music and at the London Opera Centre before becoming a principal baritone with Welsh National Opera in 1977. He sang many major roles with the Company including the title roles in Billy Bud and Eugene Onegin, Papageno in The Magic Flute, Figaro in The Barber of Seville and the Count in The Marriage of Figaro. He made his Covent Garden debut in Peter Grimes and has since returned for Dr.

Malatesta in Don Pasquale and Gugliemo in Così fan Tutte. His work for English National Opera has included Pelleas, Papageno and Tarquinius in The Rape of Lucretia. Russell Smythe often appears at Hamburg Staatsoper, Vienna and Paris. Future comitments include La Finta Giardiniera in Berlin, the title role in Eugene Onegin for Welsh National Opera, Cosí fan Tutte for English National Opera and Don Giovanni in Seville. During the summer of 1987 Russell Smythe filmed the role of Tarquinius in Britten's The Rape of Lucretia





MARK PRITCHARD

(Lighting: Les Pecheurs de Perles) began his career with Ioan Littlewood and Theatre Workshop's OH, WHAT A LOVELY WAR! He has won great acclaim for lighting designs in London's West End for the Royal Shakespeare Company, on Broadway and in Denmark, where he often works. This is is second season in Dublin.

BARBARA BRADSHAW

Barbara has worked as a designer with numerous Theatre Companies including, Field Day, Druid, Peacock, Olympia, Dublin Theatre festival, The Machine, SFX, Project Arts Centre, Rough Magic and Mountjoy Prison. Her previous designs include, Trafford Tanzi, Antigone, Playboy of the Western World, The Tempest, The Silver Tassie and the Normal Heart. She is currently working with Rough Magic on A Mugs game. Barbara has been nominated with Brian Power for a 1987 Harvey Theatre Award for theiier work with Rough Magic

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Assistant Producers: Graham Spicer, Vivian Coates.

Designers: Bernard Culshaw, Vicki Mortimer, Frank Raven. Lighting Designers: Barbara Bradshaw, Mark Pritchard

Stage Managers: Caroline Chaney, Mary O'Hagan, Anlouise Snedden.

Assistant Stage Manager: Caroline Gogan

Repetiteurs: David Gowland, Eithne Lynch, James Vaughan.

Wardrobe Supervisor: Maggie Scobie.

Wardrobe Assistants: Joan O'Cleary and Cesca Rudkin

Wigs and Make-up: Jacki Pavani Production Carpenter: Nigel Reynolds Production Electrician: Barry More

Set Construction: Aldwych Production Services; Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith; Pinnerwood Ltd; Martin Streeter & Simon Jessil; Nigel Reynolds; Frank Porter.

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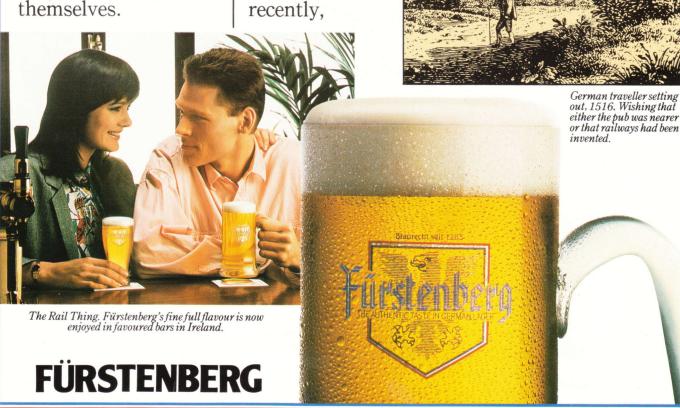


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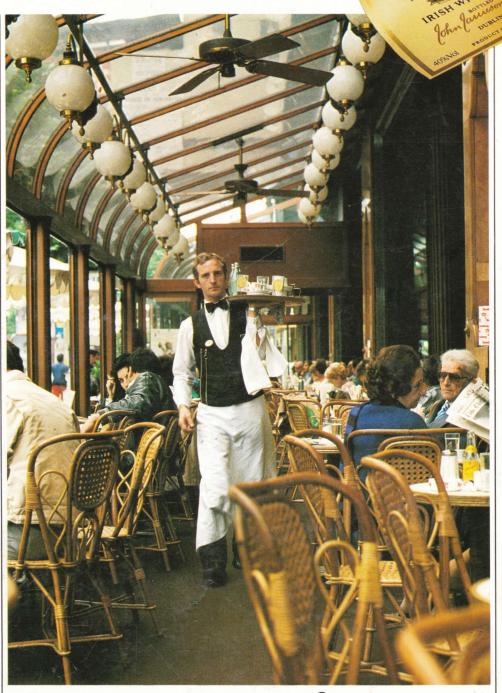
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